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978-0-521-17412-1 - Medieval Domesticity Home, Housing and Household in Medieval England

Edited by Maryanne Kowaleski and P. J. P. Goldberg

Excerpt

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1 Introduction. Medieval domesticity: home, housing and household

P. J. P. Goldberg and Maryanne Kowaleski

‘Home’ was for women and men of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries an evocative word that meant rather more than just a building or a place. As Chaucer’s host noted, it was where a man might be master.¹ For others it was a place of refuge. In the ecstatic cry ‘My delite and my hame, Ihesu, my blisful kyng’, something of the deeper emotional resonances with which the word was freighted may be discerned.² For the author of *Cursor Mundi*, Heaven was ‘þat rich ham’ from which Adam was expelled at the Fall.³ These meanings resonate in gentrywoman Jane Stonor’s hope that ‘Gode ȝeve yow goode nyghte and brynge yow welle home’, expressed in a letter to her husband whose burden was all about his absence.⁴ Home was associated with familiarity, friendship, nurturing and intimacy. These are the qualities implied by the epithet ‘homli’ so frequently found in religious discourses: for Margery Kempe, Christ was ‘homly ... in hyr sowle’; the *Cloud of Unknowing* talks of ‘þe homliest freend’; the angel Gabriel at the Annunciation ‘was homli and knowen wiþ þis ladi’.⁵ ‘Homli’ was further used to denote sexual intimacy, but it also could imply meekness or simplicity, qualities that are again given religious significance by their literary use to describe Christ.⁶

¹ Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, in *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd edn, ed. Larry Benson (Oxford University Press, 1987), line 1938: ‘Thou art a maister whan thou art at hoom’.

² *Ihesu my lefe* in B. D. Brown, ‘Religious lyrics in MS. Don.c.13’, *Bodleian Quarterly Record* 7 (1932), 4–5.

³ Richard Morris (ed.), *Cursor mundi (The cursur of the world): a Northumbrian poem of the XIVth century in four versions*, EETS OS vols. 57, 59, 99, 101 (Oxford, 1874–93), vol. 1, p. 64, line 994.

⁴ C. L. Kingsford (ed.), *The Stonor letters and papers, 1290–1483*, Camden Society 3rd series, vols. 29 and 30 (London, 1919), vol. 1, p. 110.

⁵ Sanford Brown Meech and Hope Emily Allen (eds.), *The book of Margery Kempe*, EETS OS vol. 212 (Oxford, 1940), p. 3, line 2; Phyllis Hodgson (ed.), *The Cloud of Unknowing and the Book of Privy Counselling*, EETS OS vol. 218 (Oxford, 1944; reprint 1981), p. 59, line 14.

⁶ *Middle English dictionary* under *hōmli*; accessed 12 October 2005 at <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/>.

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The Middle English word *hous(e)hold* first appeared in the late fourteenth century, when, as today, it referred mainly to a group of people who lived and worked under the same roof.⁷ The term thus alluded to a particular space (the house where they all lived) as well as to the relationships between the co-residents (relationships often overlaid with the ties of kinship), particularly such everyday, routine activities as eating and sleeping. And in later medieval usage, *household* need not mean just people; it could denote possessions. Thus Sir Roger Salwayn of York left his wife ‘all my housholde holy’ and Elizabeth Poynings likewise referred to ‘all myne hole apparell and all my stuff of household being within my dwelling place’ when she made her will.⁸ The double meaning has particular pertinence to this present collection which locates people – householders and those who reside within the home – within the material fabric of the home. *Hous* or *house* itself is an ubiquitous term with meanings that overlap with modern meanings.⁹

The concept of ‘domesticity’, a much later usage, is historically contingent;¹⁰ it means different things in respect of different kinds of people at different moments in time. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century treatments of medieval domestic life usually linked it to ‘home’, and focused on everyday activities, the structure of houses and the objects found therein.¹¹ In addition to dwelling on the material culture of domestic life, these and other early works tended to adopt the mid-nineteenth-century Western

⁷ For a useful discussion, see Felicity Riddy *et al.*, ‘The concept of the household in later medieval England’, in Sarah Rees Jones *et al.*, ‘The later medieval English urban household’, *History Compass* 4 (2006), 5–10.

⁸ E. J. Furnivall (ed.), *The fifty earliest English wills in the Court of Probate, London*, EETS OS vol. 78 (Oxford, 1882), p. 52; Norman Davis (ed.), *Paston letters and papers of the fifteenth century*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971–6), vol. 1, p. 211. The object-centred approach to the household as the repository of possessions is also evident in recent archaeological works; see, for example, Susan M. Margeson, *Norwich households: the medieval and post-medieval finds from Norwich survey excavations, 1971–1978*, East Anglian Archaeology Report no. 58 (Norwich, 1993); Geoff Egan, *The medieval household: daily living c. 1150–c. 1450*, Medieval Finds from Excavations in London, vol. 6 (London, 1998).

⁹ *Middle English dictionary* under *hous*.

¹⁰ The earliest use of *domesticity* in our meaning would appear to date from 1726, while even the use of *domestic* dates no further back than 1521: *Oxford English dictionary* under *domesticity* and *domestic*; accessed 12 October 2005 at <http://dictionary.oed.com.avoserv.library.fordham.edu/>.

¹¹ For example, Thomas Wright, *The homes of other days: a history of domestic manners and sentiments in England* (London, 1871), a revised and expanded edition of his *A history of domestic manners and sentiments in England during the Middle Ages* (London, 1862), which in turn was based on a series of papers he wrote for *Art Journal*; Marjorie Quennell, *A history of everyday things in England*, 2 vols. (London: Batsford, 1918). This was revised several times, with a separate volume for the Middle Ages: Marjorie Quennell and C. H. B. Quennell, *A history of everyday things in England*, vol. 1, 1066–1499, 4th edn (London: Batsford, 1969). Both Wright and Quennell were copiously illustrated.

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bourgeois ideal, found alike in Europe and North America, which designated separate spheres for men and women. Women were the home makers, the nurturers of children, the providers of domestic warmth and comfort, the guardians of purity and morality. Men, in contrast, were the bread winners, whose manly task it was to leave the safe haven of the house and venture into the polluting world of trade and manufacture. Such an ideology found cultural expression in art and literature, but also in contemporary architecture and furnishings.¹² This ideology of separate spheres, of woman's place within the home, of the domestic as antithetical to the world of work, colours our understanding of a comparatively recent past. What we all too easily lose sight of is the fact that ideologies represent ideals and that social practice may be more complex. The word *housewife*, for example, was being used by the early thirteenth century to denote a woman (usually the wife of the householder) who managed the everyday routine of her household, but it referred more to the work she did and was not freighted with all the meanings associated with its use in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹³ These meanings, moreover, reflected the same middle-class ideology evoked in the Western bourgeois ideal, which does not describe the experience of the labouring classes, although it was indeed the very irrelevance or inappropriateness of this ideology to the harsh realities of the socially less privileged that served to demarcate them from their middle-class neighbours.¹⁴ As an ideology specific to an era of industrialisation, of factories and factory workers, and of growing population and urbanisation, it does not represent a model for other past societies, but it does offer a useful comparator against which we may set evidence for other and earlier eras where rather different socioeconomic parameters applied.¹⁵

¹² For some American studies see: Elisabeth Donaghy Garrett, *At home: the American family 1750–1870* (New York: H. N. Abrams, 1990); Clifford E. Clark, 'Domestic architecture as an index to social history: the romantic revival and the cult of domesticity in America, 1840–1870', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 7 (1976), 33–56; Daphne Spain, *Gendered spaces* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), ch. 5. The classic English study is Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family fortunes: men and women of the English middle class, 1780–1850* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press/London, Hutchinson, 1987).

¹³ *Oxford English dictionary* under *housewife*. For an example of the use of the term in an occupational sense, see Roger Virgoe, 'Some ancient indictments in the King's Bench referring to Kent, 1450–1452', in F. R. H. DuBoulay, (ed.), *Documents illustrative of medieval Kentish society*, Kent Records vol. 18 (Ashford, 1964), p. 247.

¹⁴ For a brilliant case study of rather different ideologies operating in rural peasant society see Martine Segalen, *Love and power in the peasant family: rural France in the nineteenth century*, trans. S. Matthews (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983).

¹⁵ For a critique of how some scholars have applied the ideology of gendered separate spheres to the medieval peasantry, see P. J. P. Goldberg, 'The public and the private: women in the pre-plague economy', in P. R. Coss and S. D. Lloyd (eds.), *Thirteenth-century England III* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991), pp. 75–89.

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In the context of the English later Middle Ages – loosely the era from the eve of the Black Death to the Henrician Reformation – the sense of familiarity, of intimacy, of emotional warmth and security that *home* and *homli* conveyed to contemporaries is perhaps a useful starting point for understanding ‘medieval’ domesticity. It is, however, necessary to address the diverse cultural, material and ideological paradigms in which people from varying levels of society lived their lives. The world of the great lord and his lady was far removed from that of the poor peasant, yet both occupied physical structures that constituted homes, which were built, organised and furnished in ways that are consciously or unconsciously reflective of their particular cultural values, and which brought together greater or lesser numbers of people tied by association of kinship, friendship, commerce, service or neighbourliness. This present collection places particular emphasis on the different values associated with townsfolk (especially the more well-to-do urban bourgeoisie) and peasants, who constituted the majority of the population throughout the medieval era. The rationale for this emphasis lies in the sense that emerges in a number of the chapters, and is prompted by Felicity Riddy’s argument in the second chapter, that a distinctive bourgeois ideology of domesticity emerged in this period.

Riddy argues that ‘domesticity’ – even in its nineteenth-century form of a ‘state of mind’ defined by privacy and comfort within the physical structure of a house wherein the occupation of a domestic space by members of the family evolved into the concept of ‘home’ – was not a product of the modern period or even of seventeenth-century Holland, as other scholars have claimed, but of the fourteenth century.¹⁶ Medieval domesticity was associated first with a specifically urban value system characteristic of the bourgeoisie, well-off artisans and merchants who lived in the multi-room timber-framed houses discussed in the chapters by Sarah Rees Jones and Jane Grenville, owned the variety of household goods analysed by Jeremy Goldberg and Janet Loengard and adhered to the marriage ethics identified by Nicole Sidhu Nolan and Isabel Davis. Often depicted in medieval discourses as worldly and successful, this social group developed a style of domestic living that, unlike that of their modern counterparts, combined working and trading with the everyday routines of domestic family life. In contrast to their poorer neighbours who lived in single rooms or simple cottages, the ‘burgeis’ had the rooms and space to separate these functions into what Riddy calls a ‘domestic geography’ that

¹⁶ The definition is from John Tosh, *A man’s place: masculinity and the middle-class home in Victorian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 4, as cited in Riddy’s essay below, p. 16.

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fostered hospitality, privacy, orderliness and the routine management of time within the stability and security of the home. These same domestic values can be seen, moreover, in the shops and work rooms attached to bourgeois houses, as evident in the mounting tide of urban and guild regulation that promoted industriousness in the (often live-in) apprentices and servants of the bourgeoisie and exercised quality control over the production and trading that occurred in these homes.

Several of the essays in this volume explore the influence of domestic ideologies on the development of the physical structure of the house. As Mark Gardiner points out, we can recognise ideas about domestic space – where certain rooms are located, what functions they serve – in the forms that houses took. He focuses in particular on two service rooms: the buttery (for storing drink and drink paraphernalia) and the spence or pantry (where food and tableware were stored), which occupied adjoining rooms off the screens passage or cross-entry of the main hall of the houses of the well-to-do. Why, he asks, were these two rooms distinguished from each other and not combined into one storage area? And why did the two rooms emerge in the plan of most hall houses in the late twelfth century, well before the late medieval domestic plan in which they so commonly figured? As Gardiner shows, the two rooms were not simply an architectural expression of the responsibilities of officials of the great household, but were related to the role that architecture played in the increasingly elaborate and hierarchical rituals associated with domestic dining in elite households. As behaviour surrounding dining rituals became more formalised and orderly, so too did the organisation of domestic space in the hall and its service rooms, which provided the food and drink that underlay the lord's generosity, and thus his honour. The architectural shift of the storage area for drink from a cellar or undercroft connected to the lord's chamber – and thus under his personal and direct control – to a room off the main hall, where the lord's generosity and hospitality were on display for all to see, also paralleled the growing hierarchical emphasis displayed in where one sat and what one was served in the lord's hall. The lord and his intimates sat on a central dais at one end of the hall, and directly opposite him were doors to the two service rooms, which allowed him to preside over the parade of food into the hall and up to the high table as it went by the other tables, all placed at right angles to the lord's raised table.

Sarah Rees Jones also tracks the social context of an architectural transformation: the emergence of a distinctive style of timber-framed housing in the late twelfth and early thirteenth century, the same period that Gardiner identifies as crucial for the development of the buttery and pantry in the houses of the wealthy. Compared to the flimsier housing

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that predominated in most tenth- and eleventh-century towns, timber-framed housing was sturdier and more durable, as well as larger and multi-storeyed, improvements that were made possible by new construction technologies. This type of housing, which provided both living spaces and working spaces and included an open hall on a smaller scale than the aristocratic hall studied by Gardiner, became the imagined site of the bourgeois domesticity so prevalent in late medieval texts, as discussed in Felicity Riddy's chapter. What is particularly significant about her analysis, however, is her argument that the spread of this new type of typically bourgeois housing went hand in hand with changes in legal practices that promoted security of tenure via written charters and the emergence of a burgage tenure free of seigniorial claims. Such security promoted investment in timber-framed housing by well-off artisans and merchants, who in turn used their houses to demonstrate their status to their poorer neighbours, who had to rent cheaper and smaller accommodation and never enjoyed the full rights of urban citizenship that owners of timber-framed houses possessed.

Gardiner's focus on the central hall as the heart of the high-status home of rural lords and Rees Jones's interest in tracing the origins and topographical location of the timber-framed urban hall house are echoed in Jane Grenville's chapter, which explores the relationship between rural and urban houses, questioning the degree to which town houses were distinctively different, as Sarah Pearson has recently argued, or, as W. A. Pantin claimed in 1962, simply adaptations of pre-existing rural forms.¹⁷ In general Grenville sees town houses as in many ways quite distinctive structures meeting the very different demands of an urban economy based around trade and manufacture. By focusing, however, on the plebeian hall, apparently similar in form between peasant and bourgeois houses, she suggests that in this instance at least the urban model consciously borrows from its rural counterpart. Here she argues that familiarity of form would have helped to socialise the rural migrant, whether servant or apprentice, and helped him or her adapt to the power dynamics of the bourgeois household.

The hall may represent the setting in which the social dynamics of household life are played out and within which the different actors learn to play their parts, but the physical fabric is but part of a larger picture. We need also to explore the furnishings, the decoration, the things that we

¹⁷ Sarah Pearson, 'Rural and urban houses: "urban adaptation" reconsidered', in Katharine Giles and Christopher Dyer, (eds.), *Town and country in the Middle Ages: contrasts, contacts and interconnections, 1100–1500* (Leeds: Maney, 2005), pp. 43–64; William Abel Pantin, 'Medieval English town-house plans', *Medieval Archaeology* 6–7 (1964 for 1962–3), 202–39.

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would in our own age understand to transform the essentially impersonal 'house' into the individual 'home'. This is the theme of Jeremy Goldberg's chapter. The differences between peasant and bourgeois lifestyles appear sharply focused. Thus we may contrast the essentially pragmatic concerns with eating and sleeping suggested by peasants' parsimonious investment in furnishings with the comparative luxury and intimacy provided by the chamber within the bourgeois and mercantile house. The bourgeois hall may not have constituted intimate space, but with its benches, cushions and painted wall hangings it was visually unlike its country cousins. Here we find the mundane given devotional resonance. Cushions were fashionable must-have accessories in bourgeois halls and chambers from the earlier fourteenth century, but their use in chapels as kneelers or as rests for devotional books suggests that their function went beyond mere displays of wealth and comfort.

Attention to actual furnishings, this time of the domestic interior of the convent, is also central to Marilyn Oliva's chapter, which focuses on the essential domesticity of the lives of later medieval English nuns. Drawing on inventories, purchases recorded in household accounts and bequests in wills, Oliva shows the similar level of domestic comfort enjoyed by nuns and the gentry in the later Middle Ages: both scattered rushes or straw on their floors, draped their walls with (often decorated) hangings and slept on featherbeds with sheets, blankets, coverlets and pillows; both stored their bedding and valuables in chests and cupboards; had tables, chairs, benches, trestles and cushions in their halls; washed their hands in basins made of pewter or latten and dried their hands with linen towels; ate off earthenware plates laid on linen tablecloths; used utensils that included silver spoons; drank from bowls and cups that were often embellished with silver; and had a variety of other household fittings such as andirons and candlesticks. Most of these furnishings were also found in the homes of the wealthy merchant bourgeoisie. Oliva suggests that the nuns – most of whom came from the parish gentry, wealthy yeomen or urban bourgeoisie – were recreating the domestic environment with which they were most familiar.¹⁸ The nuns' furnishings, however, were much more likely to be decorated with religious images than those owned by the gentry or bourgeoisie, and they also often put domestic items to devotional use, such as the linen housling towels which the nuns draped over the Eucharist chalice or around their missals and other service books when carrying them to chapel. This religious use of everyday domestic linens was

¹⁸ For the social background of medieval English nuns, see Marilyn Oliva, *The convent and the community in late medieval England: female convents in the diocese of Norwich, 1350–1540* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998).

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paralleled in the domestic furnishings of the specifically religious spaces of the convent. In decorating their chapels, vestries and churches with wall hangings, curtains, cushions and linens similar in material, form and adornment to those found in their cloistered dormitories, refectories, chapter rooms and inner halls and parlours, the nuns were domesticising their religious spaces in the same way that they sacralised their living quarters with religious imagery.

Several authors besides Oliva draw attention to the gendered dimension of household goods. Goldberg, for example, suggests that bourgeois wives – whose greater market involvement compared to peasant wives probably gave them more voice in household expenditure – may have focused their consumption choices on the bedchamber and its furnishings, the most intimate space in the house. This room was not only where such a wife and her husband slept, but also where she gave birth to her children, entertained female friends and kin, and said her prayers and other devotional practices.¹⁹ In focusing on the legal boundaries of women's ownership of chattels, Janet Loengard points out how the gap between legal theory and practice illustrates medieval English society's understanding of the close association between women and certain types of household goods. Under common law, everything a woman owned became her husband's when she married; if he pre-deceased her, he was theoretically free to leave them to anyone he chose, or to his executor if he did not specify heirs. But husbands rarely did this. Many, indeed most, men made their wives their executors and/or explicitly bequeathed them properties and chattels. They chose in particular to exceed the common law definition of paraphernalia (most narrowly conceived of as the clothes on the wife's back) by bequeathing their widows virtually all their clothing and their bedroom furnishings, a finding that reinforces Goldberg's suggestion on women's close association with the bedchamber. Women's wills also considered these items theirs to give. And husbands sometimes gave back to their widows all the goods and property they had brought to the marriage (the cooking utensils, tableware and bedding so typical of later 'hope chests'), a 'gift' which, like the extended definition of paraphernalia, was supported by canon law. Borough customary law also was more liberal than common law; in many towns, a wife was automatically entitled to a percentage (usually one-third) of her husband's chattels for her lifetime, an arrangement that reinforces Riddy's arguments about the

¹⁹ For the customisation of domestic spaces for devotional purposes by adding furnishings, particularly to the bedchamber, see Diana Webb, 'Domestic space and devotion in the Middle Ages', in Andrew Spicer and Sarah Hamilton (eds.), *Defining the holy: sacred space in medieval and early modern Europe* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 27–47.

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early emergence of a specifically ‘bourgeois’ domesticity. Both Loengard and Riddy, moreover, emphasise the impact that the intimacy of domestic living – of sharing a kitchen and bedroom and the routines of everyday life – must have had on the relationship between husband and wife and thus on the husband’s decision to ignore common law restrictions.

Whereas ‘house’ could be understood as a primarily functional structure providing warmth, shelter and a place to sleep, but not necessarily the focus of significant social interaction, of intimacy, or of private devotion, ‘home’, the locus of domesticity, was an ideological construct that invested much greater cultural significance in the physical structure as a stage for playing out a range of social and gender relations.²⁰ The physical form of the house and the arrangement of rooms had meanings that were shaped by and shaped the lives of the people who used them. Thus the ubiquitous presence of buttery and pantry in well-to-do houses from the high medieval era can be tied *inter alia* to devotional constructions of sharing food, one of the primary functions of the household, a theme that forms part of Mark Gardiner’s chapter tracing the evolution of these two rooms over several centuries. Here there are resonances with the Mass, that central institution of late medieval Catholicism. This we see, for example, with striking clarity in a visual parallel in the Luttrell Psalter: a depiction of the Last Supper, upon which the celebration of the Eucharist was based, is paired with Sir Geoffrey Luttrell, the Psalter’s patron, seated at high table, drinking vessel in hand.²¹ The Eucharistic resonances of dining at high table, reflected also in the symbolic parallel between hall and church in which high table and high altar occupy spatially congruent positions, immediately warn us that the sort of binary divide between the secular and the sacred that we take so much for granted worked differently in the later Middle Ages.²² This is a theme that is central to Marilyn Oliva’s and Mary Erler’s studies and runs through a number of our other chapters; in a culture permeated by religion, people liked to make connections between this world and the next or to valorise their lives and their values by giving them devotional meaning.

²⁰ This observation is coloured by Judith Butler’s understanding of gender as performative in her influential *Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

²¹ Richard K. Emmerson and P.J. P. Goldberg, “‘The Lord Geoffrey had me made’: lordship and labour in the Luttrell Psalter”, in James Bothwell, P.J. P. Goldberg and W.M. Ormrod (eds.), *The problem of labour in fourteenth-century England* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2000), pp. 45, 52–5.

²² On the blurring of these boundaries, see also Jeanne Nuechterlein, ‘The domesticity of sacred space in the fifteenth-century Netherlands’, in Spicer and Hamilton (eds.), *Defining the holy*, pp. 49–79, and Webb, ‘Domestic space and devotion’.

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The complex intermeshing of the devotional and the mundane that seems so characteristic of bourgeois culture is again reflected in Nicole Nolan Sidhu's chapter on Chaucer's treatment of the Griselda legend in the 'Clerk's Tale'. Sidhu explores how Chaucer adapts a well-known story to provide a model of affective piety for the bourgeois home and for the bourgeois male in particular. In asking why late-fourteenth-century audiences found this tale of a husband's depravity towards his wife so compelling, her discussion takes us to the heart of gender and power relations within the later medieval household. Sidhu argues that women and male clerics were not especially drawn to the tale, but that laymen were, responding with anger and then empathy by imagining themselves as Griselda's protector. Chaucer, in fact, heightened aspects of Petrarch's version of the tale to augment the male emotional response, which was founded on notions of respectability that stressed the male householder's responsibility for the moral supervision not only of his own household, but of his local community. Bourgeois regulation of bad behaviour within the community, Sidhu argues, could thus take on the air of religious devotion. In the absence of an effective Church response to laymen's growing devotional demands for affective models of piety, laymen found their own outlets, such as the religious fraternities that proliferated during this period. These associations were most often associated with well-off artisans and the bourgeoisie, the same well-off bourgeois audience to whom Chaucer directed most of his writing. Griselda's own social position as a young peasant girl taken into the house of a wealthier man would also have resonated with married bourgeois householders' responsibility for the young female servants under their care. These same community expectations helped bourgeois laymen to imagine themselves intervening to safeguard Griselda. In doing so they were following medieval patriarchal dictates to nurture women: an ideal that suggests, according to Sidhu, a domestic model of female-male reciprocity, not an oppositional model in which men discipline women. Yet the reconciliation of Griselda and her cruel husband also justifies the husband's authority within marriage, albeit tempered by the bourgeois values of sobriety and seriousness.

Isabel Davis also discerns the emergence of a new bourgeois marriage ethic in the late fourteenth century, one that challenges the customary clerical privileging of virginity and chastity with an emphasis on the value of domestic conjugality. She traces this new ethic in William Langland's unusual deployment of the figure of Abraham in *Piers Plowman*, who in the B-text rendition displays a positive zeal for the married state. Langland draws upon the different iconographic and exegetical traditions surrounding the Old Testament figure to create a